

Building Livable Communities in Massachusetts



Mitt Romney,
Governor
Kerry Healey,
Lieutenant
Governor

**Office for Commonwealth Development
Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

Why Smart Growth?

- Transportation: Only real solution to gridlock
- Housing: Affordability crisis requires more compact development, recycling of land
- Environment: Protect air, water, farms & forests
- Demographics: Empty nesters and seniors demand urban living opportunities
- Fiscal policy: Use the infrastructure we have!
- Economic competitiveness
 - MA must have great communities to compete
 - Regional Competitiveness Councils want vital urban centers

The Romney Administration and Smart Growth: 10 First Steps

1. Office for Commonwealth Development
2. Commonwealth Capital
3. Fix It First
4. Highway Program: Communities First
5. Transit-Oriented Development
6. Development-Oriented Transit
7. Smart Growth Zoning Law
8. Environmental Smart Growth Policies
9. Historic building redevelopment
10. Local capacity building

(1) Office for Commonwealth Development

- Directs and integrates work of
 - Executive Office of Transportation
 - Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
 - Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Division of Energy Resources
- Aligns agency policies, regulations, operating budgets and capital spending plans with smart growth policy
- Chairs Commonwealth Development Coordinating Council

(2) Commonwealth Capital

- Common administration of discretionary capital grant programs to ensure
 - Consistency of projects with smart growth policy
 - Alignment of municipal policies and zoning with Commonwealth interest in smart growth
 - Coordination of agency decision-making
- Includes economic and community development, open space protection, off-street parking, wastewater infrastructure and other programs

(3) Fix It First

- MassHighway: Road and Bridge Program
 - Priority for repair and rehabilitation of existing streets, roads, structurally deficient bridges
- Department of Conservation and Recreation: World-Class Parks and Parkways
 - Merger and reform of state parks agencies
 - \$1 billion backlog being tackled
 - \$60 million more in new supplemental budget bill
- MBTA: “State of Good Repair” program
 - A national model
- Public Housing

(4) Highway Program: Communities First

- New *Highway Project Development and Design Manual* to incorporate principles of
 - Context-sensitive design
 - Accommodation of all modes (inc. peds, bikes, transit)
 - Traffic calming
- Being produced through collaborative process
- Will be “most progressive in country”
- Day-to-day decision making reflects new philosophy

(5) Transit-Oriented Development

- Commonwealth Development/MBTA Program
 - Community-based master planning -- stations with surplus MBTA property
 - Re-zoning completed by 3/4 pilot communities
 - Support for development around many other stations
- MassHousing Priority Development Fund
 - \$100 M, including TOD financing and planning grants
- Funding
 - New \$30 M program for parking, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, housing development
 - Plus \$40 M more for MBTA Infrastructure Fund

(6) Development-Oriented Transit

- New objective criteria guide transportation project selection and prioritization
 - Smart growth/community-building role of projects considered
- Smart growth impacts figure prominently in early decision-making on major projects
 - Greenbush Line restoration
 - Silver Line Phase III
- Ditto for highway program: expansion supports city- and town-center development
 - E.g., Worcester, Pittsfield

(7) Smart Growth Zoning Law (Chapter 40R)

- Incentives to create “smart growth zoning districts” in eligible locations
 - City, town, village centers/commercial districts
 - Around transit stations
 - Other appropriate “smart growth” locations
- Infrastructure + walkability = criteria
- Must have 8-20 units/acre, affordable units, housing or mixed use
- Incentives: State \$ for re-zoning and issuance of building permits, priority in grant programs
 - Education costs to be addressed

(8) Environmental Smart Growth Policies

- Fast track for smart growth projects being developed for
 - Environmental review (MEPA) process
 - Dep't of Environmental Protection permitting processes
- State Revolving Fund Program (water infrastructure) reform
 - Facilitate sewerage for town center growth
 - Get tougher on sewerage in outlying areas
- Smart conservation: land protection strategies

(9) Historic Building Redevelopment

- State Historic Preservation Tax Credit signed into law
 - Focus on smart growth, affordable housing
 - Initial authorization \$10 million/year
- Support for upper-story redevelopment
 - Housing Development Support Program funding doubled (DHCD)
 - Forum on “Upper Story Redevelopment: Strategies for Your Downtown” (Oct. 13, 2004, Worcester)
- Tax Credits-Brownfields

(10) Local Capacity Building

- Grants to cities and towns
 - Priority Development Fund (DHCD and MassHousing)
 - Smart Growth Grants (EOEA)
- Commonwealth Development agency staff support
 - mass.gov/ocd
- Governor's Awards for Smart Growth
- Technical assistance coordination

Not Just Boston and Cambridge. . .



But Lowell. . .



And Haverhill. . .



and Brockton. . .

Photo: Mass. EOE



Photo: Mass. EOE



and Newburyport. . .



and Northampton. . .



and Adams, Ashland, Brookline,
Canton, Dennis, Framingham,
Holyoke, Littleton, Lynn, Malden,
Millis, Natick, Peabody, Pittsfield,
Quincy, Revere, Shelburne Falls,
Woburn, Worcester, and. . . ?

